

**BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING**  
**URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE REVIEW PANEL**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Date:** January 22, 2015

**Meeting No.:** 198

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**Project:** 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Initiative  
Frederick Elementary School  
Addition and Renovations

**Phase:** Discussion

**Developer:** Baltimore City Schools | MSA | State of Maryland

**Architect:** USA Architects

**Location:** 2510 Frederick Avenue, bounded on the north by Frederick Avenue, to the west by Millston Avenue, on the south by Lehman Street, and to the east by the service yard to an operating shopping center

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**PRESENTATION:**

Anthony Cataldo introduced Sara Paraniham from the Planning Office. Ms. Parnell introduced the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Initiative, noting that Frederick Elementary is the first of approximately two dozen school projects that will be reviewed by UDARP. The initiative is a joint development project among four entities: the State of Maryland, Baltimore City government, the Baltimore City School System, and the Maryland Stadium Authority. Ms. Paraniham noted that the project has completed the second phase of the design process. Finally, Ms. Paraniham also indicated that the Planning Department was engaged to lead the “Inspire” process, attempting to identify synergies between the neighborhoods and the schools, and to capitalize on the improvements to strengthen the character and services in the neighborhood.

Mr. Joe Mayzck, Project Manager with the MD Stadium Authority provided an overview of program goals and specific neighborhood issues, including closing the Samuel B. Morse School for upper grades, and consolidating the students into the expanded Frederick Elementary School. Mr. Mayzck noted that though another architect had prepared the Feasibility Study, USA Architects had been selected as the successful architect for the full design during a procurement process. Mr. Mayzck introduced the project team, including Mr. Paul Swartz, Project Director from USA Architects, and Michael Fisher from Site Resources.

The project team presented a summary of the program and the conceptual design; key points are outlined in the attached 15% Design Narrative dated January 14, 2015. The architect reiterated that the design expression is not representative of the final design intention, and that they were still in the very early concept stage.

**PANEL COMMENTS:**

The panel noted the following specific comments and suggestions related to the Conceptual site and building design:

1. General

- a. Both the new addition and the modifications to the existing building should produce a new facility that inspires its users and becomes a strong civic symbol and source of pride for the neighborhood, as well as a top-notch learning and teaching environment.
2. Site
  - a. The panel suggested further study and refinement of the connecting pathways, particularly on the south edge along Lehman Street.
  - b. The entry sequences from both Frederick and Millston Avenues are strongly biased toward vehicular access. Additional attention should be focused on the pedestrian experience, with special attention to sidewalk widths, tree canopy, lighting, and street furniture.
  - c. Use landform to create space, inform uses, and define special areas, such as the playgrounds, and even raingardens and storm water management facilities.
  - d. Integration of a strong landscape program – durable and poetic – will create a memorable experience for the students, faculty, staff and the community.
3. Building Design
  - a. The panel is very concerned about the architectural expression for the proposed addition to the school. It has the character of a 1970's suburban office building, not the open and accessible 21<sup>st</sup> century school described in the Design Narrative. The panel looks forward to significant further development.
  - b. The panel is also very concerned about the lack of attention given to the existing building. While it may maintain the existing masonry as its primary skin material, new and larger openings can give significantly elevate the design character. The existing school mass and material can continue to serve as counterpoint to the addition.
  - c. The panel suggested that the circulation and connection between the existing school could improve circulation and connection between the main entry, the rear staff parking area, the west play yard, and the gym.
  - d. Entrance expression and protective canopy offer great design opportunities – look forward to further development.
  - e. Consider introducing natural light into the collaborative spaces in both buildings.
4. The panel encouraged the design team to explore clear expression of interior program on the exterior of both the new addition and modification to the existing building.

**PANEL ACTION:**

Discussion only; no action required. The panel looks forward to further development of the design for the project.

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**Attending:**

Michael Fisher – Site Resources

Paul Swartz – USA Architects

Avon Wilson, Greg Ramirez, Tom Henderson, Charlie Ravenna, Kate Acker – CSP

Larry Flynn, Cyndi Smith – City Schools

Tracey Estep, Kate Brower, Robert Wall – BCRP

Joseph Mayzch – MD Stadium Authority

UDARP Panel Members – Messrs. Gary Bowden, Rich Burns, David Haresign\*, and David Rubin

Planning Department - Director Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Christina Gaymon, Sarah Paraniham, Kyle Leggs, Reni Lawal, Aaron Bond, Mary Clapsaddle, Katie-Rose Imbriano, Wolde Ararsa